Some of the Committee's initiatives for 2006 include developing and encouraging mentorship of the growing precollege chapters and student chapters, the development of a basic meteorology packet for use in school and educator presentations, and facilitating communication between all chapters.

The LCAC supports the growing number of AMS chapters by addressing concerns, such as chapter development, providing speakers, creative programming, and community education. Local chapters can update their chapter information and post minutes to *BAMS* through the AMS Web site at www.ametsoc.org (go to "Local Chapter Information"). The Committee actively welcomes suggestions and comments through Kelly Garvey, AMS manager of marketing and special programs, who can be reached at *kgarvey@ametsoc.org*.

—Jenny Dean, 2006 LCAC Chair

OBITUARIES

DAVID SIMONDS JOHNSON 1924–2004

David Simonds Johnson, past president and Honorary Fellow of AMS, and a pioneer in the use of weather satellites, died of Alzheimer's disease on 17 December 2004 at his home in Annapolis, Maryland.

Johnson, "Dave" to friends and associates alike, was a meteorologist and administrator for NOAA for more than a half-century. He served as the first assistant administrator of the National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service (NESDIS).

Dave was born in Porterville, California, in 1924. He studied at the University of California, Berkeley, before entering the U.S. Army Air Force in 1943, where he attended Reed College and Harvard University. After leaving the service in 1946, he joined the U.S. Weather Bureau in Boise, Idaho, as a meteorological aide. In 1947, he transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), as an associate meteorologist. While at UCLA, he received his A. B. in 1948 and M.A. in meteorology in 1949.

In 1952, Johnson accepted a position with the Pineapple Research Institute in Honolulu, Hawaii, serving as an associate meteorologist until, in 1956, he returned to the Weather Bureau as one of four founding members of what was then called the U.S. Weather Bureau's Meteorological Satellite Activities (MSA) Branch in Suitland, Maryland. For the next 26 years, he served as director of the successor to MSA, the Meteorological Satellite Laboratory, and eventually, director of the National Weather Satellite Center and its successor, NESDIS. In 1976, he became the first assistant administrator of NOAA for satellites and data.

A prestigious award presented annually since 1999 by the National Space Club is named for him. The NOAA David Johnson Award recognizes a young scientist who "encourages new thinking, problem solving, or applications of satellite data." Johnson did just that as leader of the government's weather satellite program. Those who worked with him considered him "an eminent scientist of his time, known worldwide," according to one former colleague. He was a most caring mentor for young scientists who worked under him.

David Simonds Johnson

Gregory W. Withee, the current assistant administrator for Satellites and Information Services, agrees, noting that "he really paved the way for modern satellite technology."

During his entire government career, Johnson was a leader in the United States' weather satellite program, introducing two series of satellites: TIROS/NOAA, which provide observations of the entire Earth twice daily to weather services around the world; and GOES, which provides "time-lapse" motion photography as frequently as each minute to specialists in the Western Hemisphere. Each series has evolved to provide great quantities of data useful not only in meteorology, but also in climate, ecology, and environmental analysis and prediction. In 1958, Johnson led negotiations between the Weather Bureau and NASA for use of *TIROS 1*, the first weather satellite, launched in 1960. He also led the effort in 1979–81 to establish a commercial Landsat program in the United States. Although the Landsat program eventually remained within the government under

NASA, several commercial remote sensing satellite programs have since been developed and are in operation.

A tireless worker for innovation, reliability, and service to not only the United States, but also the entire world, Johnson pressed for the launch and operational status of geostationary weather satellites, a concept first proposed by Verner Suomi of the University of Wisconsin. Geostationary satellites are now built, launched, and operated by six countries/organizations around the world. Among his many accomplishments, Johnson conceptualized and supported the full-time operation of direct broadcast of U.S. weather satellite data so that any country could receive and use its pictures with simple, inexpensive equipment. In the late 1960s, he proposed, brought to fruition, and made available to all scientific users a system of satellite data collection from remote locations. Later, a similar system was added, developed by the French space agency CNES, to collect and track the source of the data.

Among his many honors, he received the Department of Commerce Gold Medal (the department's highest award) and the NASA Exceptional Service Medal, and was elected an Honorary Fellow of AMS, fellow of the American Astronautical Society, and associate fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Internationally, he served as member of two joint working groups of the international Committee on Space Research and the International Council of Scientific Unions. In this context, Johnson was responsible for establishment, in 1989, of the Executive Committee Panel of Experts on Satellites at the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Because of his work in the "internationalization" of weather satellites, Johnson—as president of the AMS—led an early 1960s delegation that opened a dialogue with the State Meteorological Administration of the Peoples Republic of China. The bilateral agreement worked out by this delegation between the U.S. and Chinese weather services remains in effect today. Another critical achievement was the establishment of the "weather hotline," so called because it allowed the exchange of weather data in near-real-time between the U.S. Weather Bureau in Washington and the USSR in Moscow. This data exchange predated the current Global Telecommunications System operated among the nearly 200 members of the WMO.

In 1972, Johnson called the first coordination meeting of all operators—and proposed operators—of weather satellites. Dubbed "CGMS," the group, whose full name is the Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites, is today a model for other non-political intergovernmental coordinating groups, and has recently been expanded to include research programs as well as operational series. Throughout his career, Johnson was adamant that an operational weather satellite system must be totally reliable and never have gaps in data availability.

Following his retirement from NOAA in 1982, Johnson served as chair of a committee under the National Academy of Sciences that critically reviewed modernization plans of the NWS. He also served as a consultant to the WMO, writing a number of papers used in assessing and coordinating the world's weather satellite programs, including "The Role of Satellites in WMO Programmes in the 1980s," a document that was considered an authoritative reference for more than 20 years.

An avid sailor, he was the owner of the 43-foot ketch *Eole*, named for the first remote sensing satellite launched by France. This hobby was partly responsible for another "DSJ" concept: "Nowcasting." NOAA Weather Radio now regularly provides nowcasts—reports of current observations—to boaters throughout the United States. Dave also became a self-taught expert and collector of fine wines, of which he had an excellent selection.

Johnson, who had lived in Annapolis since the 1970s, was married twice. His first wife, the former Betty Jeanne Reed, died in 1973. His second wife, the former Margaret McFarland, known to her many friends as "Peg," died in 1987.

Family members recalled Johnson's dry, "English-like" sense of humor and his ability to relate to people from all walks of life. "He was a very bright man," says stepdaughter Molly McFarland Burke of Gaithersburg, Maryland. "Sometimes when you're bright, you don't seem to relate to the rest of the world. He could relate to someone with 10 Ph.D.s or someone who didn't graduate from high school."

In addition to Burke, Johnson is survived by two stepdaughters, Peggy McFarland Garman of Edgewater, Maryland; and Martha McFarland McElroy of Frederick, Maryland; five stepgrandchildren; and three stepgreat-grandchildren.

—Larry Heacock